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Remarks

Applicants thank the Examiner for kindly allowing claims 42, 43, 48, 63, 66 and 101-104. Applicants also thank the Examiner for his helpful suggestions regarding claims 90, 92-96, and 105.

Claim 74 has been canceled without prejudice. New claims 106-127 have been added. Newly submitted claims 106-126 are dependent either directly or indirectly on allowed claim 42. Accordingly, Applicants submit that new claims 106-127 require no additional search and respectfully request entry thereof. Support for new claims 106-127 can be found in general throughout Applicants' Specification and in particular, for example, as follows: claims 106, page 9, lines 17-29; claim 107, page 9, lines 17-29 and page 11, lines 22-24; claims 108-110 and 112-119, page 14, lines 26-30; claim 111, page 9, lines 17-29; claims 120 and 121, page 6, lines 8-13; claims 122-125, original claims 23 and 24 and page 19, lines 32-37; claim 126, page 7, line 13; claim 127, page 8, line 28.

Applicants submit that the amendment to claim 88 renders moot the rejection of claims 90, and 92-96 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Sargent et al. (U.S. 3,595,237) in view of Dare et al. (U.S. 5,591,154).

Sargent et al. disclose an apparatus for applying a strip of hot melt pressure sensitive adhesive to a sanitary napkin.

Dare et al. disclose the use of styrene-butadiene-styrene block copolymers containing 30 % by weight to 50 % by weight styrene and having a vinyl content of greater than 35 % in hot melt pressure sensitive adhesives. Dare et al. further disclose that their adhesives can be applied to an outer covering layer of an absorbent structure or it may be transfer coated onto a release paper using such methods as flow coating, roller coating, and knife coating. Dare et al. also disclose that the adhesive can be extruded into place by using a hot-melt extruder or die face.

Claim 6 is directed to a method of coating, wherein a hot melt adhesive, which has been thermally made flowable, is provided in the form of a substantially continuous nonporous film without contact of the film with a substrate, and the film is then disposed upon a release-coated substrate comprising a web and is then transfer-coated onto a second substrate. It is undisputed that Sargent et al. do not teach providing a hot melt

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adhesive, which has been thermally made flowable, in the form of a substantially continuous nonporous film without contact of the film with a substrate. Sargent et al. also do not teach how to achieve a method in which a substantially continuous nonporous film of hot melt adhesive is provided without contact of the film with a substrate.

Dare et al. do not cure the deficiencies of Sargent et al. Dare et al. do not teach a noncontact coating method that includes providing a hot melt adhesive, which has been thermally made flowable, in the form of a substantially continuous nonporous film without contact of the film with a substrate, or how to achieve such a method. Therefore, the proposed combination of Dare et al. and Sargent et al. lacks a required element of claim 6. For this reason alone Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Sargent et al. in view of Dare et al. is unwarranted and request that it be withdrawn.

The proposed combination of Sargent et al. and Dare et al. is further deficient for at least the following additional reasons. The adhesive of Dare et al. is to be used as a positioning adhesive and/or a construction adhesive. Dare et al. do not teach or suggest that their adhesive is in the form of a substantially nonporous continuous film. The only mention Dare et al. make of an adhesive film is a statement that an adhesive film could be coated onto silicone release liner and then transferred to an absorbent. Nothing in Dare et al. teaches or suggests how the adhesive film is to be coated onto silicone release liner. Dare et al. disclose a number of different coating methods including flow coating, roller coating, knife coating and extrusion coating. However, Dare et al. do not direct the skilled artisan to select any particular method for coating an adhesive film on a release liner --let alone to select the method of Sargent et al. Moreover, the skilled artisan, desiring to coat a film of hot melt adhesive, would not think to use the method of Sargent et al. to coat a film, because the method of Sargent et al. is for coating a strip of adhesive --not a film. In addition, Dare et al. do not teach or suggest that the film referred to therein is a substantially continuous nonporous film. Dare et al. also do not teach or suggest the need for or desirability of forming a substantially continuous nonporous film. Therefore, the skilled artisan would have no reason to form a hot melt adhesive composition in the form of a substantially continuous nonporous film and further would have no reason to modify the method of Sargent et al. in the manner proposed in the

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Office action. For at least these reasons a *prima facie* case of obviousness of claim 6 has not been established. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Sargent et al. in view of Dare et al. is unwarranted and request that it be withdrawn.

Claim 74 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Korpman (U.S. 3,783,072).

Applicants submit that the cancellation of claim 74 renders moot the rejection of claim 74 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Korpman and therefore request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 88-90 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Hyde et al. (U.S. 6,197,419).

Hyde et al. disclose a coextrusion process in which molten streams of pressure sensitive adhesive compositions are provided to a feed block 130. The extrusion die 140 deposits a unified molten extrudate onto a solid substrate 150 supplied from a roll 151 so that a first surface of the extrudate is in contact with the surface of the substrate 150. The substrate 150 contacts the surface of a casting wheel 160 and is interposed between the surface of the casting wheel 160 and the molten stream.

Claim 88 is directed to a method of coating that includes releasing a hot melt adhesive composition that has been thermally made flowable from a coating device in the form of a continuous film without contact between the coating device and a substrate, contacting a first roller with the continuous film, and transferring the continuous film from the first roller to a substrate. The hot melt adhesive composition includes thermoplastic polymer and tackifying resin. Hyde et al. do not teach releasing a hot melt adhesive composition that has been thermally made flowable from a coating device in the form of a continuous film. Rather, Hyde et al. disclose depositing a unified molten extrudate onto a solid substrate. Hyde et al. do not teach that their molten extrudate is a film. This is further demonstrated by the fact that Hyde et al. refer to polymeric films but at no point do Hyde et al. refer to their molten extrudate as a film. Hyde et al. thus disclose that their extrudate is something other than a film. Since Hyde et al. fail to teach releasing a hot melt adhesive composition that has been thermally made flowable from a coating device in the form of a continuous film, Hyde et al. lack a required element of

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claim 88. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 88 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Hyde et al. is unwarranted and request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 89-90 are dependent upon claim 88 and are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Hyde et al. for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 88.

Claims 91-93 and 95-100 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al. and "Extrusion Coating & Laminating," by Mainstone.

The rejection of claims 91-93 and 95-100 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al. and "Extrusion Coating & Laminating," by Mainstone is based on the above-refuted premise that Hyde et al. teach releasing a hot melt adhesive composition that has been thermally made flowable from a coating device in the form of a continuous film. Since this premise is not sound, and the secondary references fail to cure the deficiencies of Hyde et al., Applicants submit that the rejection of claims 91-93 and 95-100 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al. and "Extrusion Coating & Laminating," by Mainstone cannot stand for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 88 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Hyde et al. and respectfully request that it be withdrawn.

Claim 94 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al. and "Extrusion Coating & Laminating," by Mainstone and further in view of Migliorini et al. (U.S. 5,591,250).

The rejection of claim 94 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al. and "Extrusion Coating & Laminating," by Mainstone and further in view of Migliorini et al. is based on the above-refuted premise that Hyde et al. teach releasing a hot melt adhesive composition that has been thermally made flowable from a coating device in the form of a continuous film. Since this premise is not sound, and the secondary references of Werenicz et al., Mainstone and Migliorini et al. fail to cure the deficiencies of Hyde et al., the rejection of claim 94 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al., Mainstone and Migliorini et al. cannot stand for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 88 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Hyde et al. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claim 94 under 35

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U.S.C. § 103 over Hyde et al. in view of Werenicz et al., Mainstone and Migliorini et al.  
be withdrawn.

Applicants submit that the claims now pending in the application are in condition  
for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to  
telephone the undersigned should a teleconference interview facilitate prosecution of this  
application.

Please charge any additional fees that may be required or credit any overpayment  
made to Deposit Account No. 06-2241.

Respectfully submitted,

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